

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-12 SOE-02 ARA-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 EA-10 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03

NASA-01 NEA-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OIC-02 SP-02 PA-01

DOE-11 CEQ-01 OES-07 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00

EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01

OMB-01 /177 W

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R 101133Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7046

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY N

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 3034

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, NI, FR, XJ

SUBJECT: FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO NIGERIA

REF: LAGOS 2745

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

1. AT THE CONCLUSION OF FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER DE OUIRINGAUD'S VISIT TO LAGOS, THE FOLLOWING JOINT COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED:

BEGIN TEXT. AT THE INVITATION OF THE HONOURABLE COMMISSIONOR

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FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FRANCE, HIS EXCELLENCY MR. LOUIS DE GUIRINGAUD PAID AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO NIGERIA FROM THE 1ST TO 4TH MARCH, 1978.

DURING THE VISIT THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER WAS RECEIVED IN AUDIENCE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE HEAD OF THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT, COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES. HE ALSO CALLED ON AND HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER MEMBERS

OF THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. HE HELD EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ON A NUMBER OF BILATERAL MATTERS AS WELL AS ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS PARTICULARLY AS CONCERNS AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST, DISARMAMENT, NORTH SOUTH DIALOGUE.

THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT AGREED WITH THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FRANCE IN THE ASSESSMENT THAT THE PRESENT STATE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WAS SATISFACTORY, PARTICULARLY IN THE FIELDS OF ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION. THEY ALSO AGREED THAT THERE WAS MUCH SCOPE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE RELATIONS ESPECIALLY WITH INCREASED INVESTMENTS OF FRANCE IN INDUSTRIAL SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGY.

WITH REGARD TO GENERAL INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS THE VISITING FOREIGN MINISTER AGREED WITH THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS THAT EFFORTS TO RESTRUCTURE THE EXISTING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM HAVE REGRETTABLY NOT YET COMPLETELY SUCCEEDED ALTHOUGH THE NORTH SOUTH DIALOGUE HAVE (SIC) BEEN PARTIALLY

FRUITFUL. THEY RECOGNIZED THE NEED TO ADOPT NEW AND INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES TO TACKLE THESE PROBLEMS OF GLOBAL DIMENSION. THEY BOTH EXPRESSED THEIR ENCOURAGEMENT THAT THE DIALOGUE IS STILL BEING KEPT ALIVE AND THAT NEW INITIATIVES ARE BEING PROPOSED.

THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER INVITED ATTENTION TO THE DISARMAMENT (SIC) AND EXPLAINED HIS GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ABOUT THE INADEQUACY OF THE PRESENT NEGOTIATING STRUCTURES ON THIS
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QUESTION AND HE OUTLINED HIS GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS TO BROADEN THE FRAMEWORK FOR MEANINGFUL INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON DISARMAMENT. THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS NOTED THESE PROPOSALS WITH INTEREST AND EXPRESSED THE WISH THAT CURRENT MASSIVE EXPENDITURE ON ARMS REQUIRED TO BE RE-CHANNELED TO (SIC) MORE PRODUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. BOTH GOVERNMENTS WILL ACTIVELY TAKE PART IN THE FORTHCOMING SPECIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON DISARMAMENT.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS EXPLAINED THE MOTIVES AND OBJECTIVES OF NIGERIA'S EFFORTS TO FORGE PRACTICAL COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA. THIS COMMITMENT UNDERLINES NIGERIA'S

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LAGOS 3034

ADVOCACY OF AN ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY
OF WEST AFRICAN STATES. THE FRNCH FOREIGN MINISTER AFFIRMED
HIS GOVERNMENT'S UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF ECOWAS WHICH HE TESTIFIED DURING HIS STAY BY VISITING THE
HEADQUARTERS OF THE ORGANIZATION BASED IN LAGOS.

BOTH THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THE VISITING
FRENCH MINISTER AGREED THAT INTRA-AFRICAN DISPUTES AND CONFLICT
SITUATIONS SHOULD BE BEST HANDLED BY AFRICAN MEDIATORY EFFORTS
AND LOCAL MACHINERIES FOR SETTLEMENT. THESE PROCEDURES SHOULD
APPLY TO SUCH SITUATIONS AS THOSE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA,
WESTERN SAHARA ANC ELSEWHERE. IN THIS CONNECTION THE COMMISSIONER
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FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THE FRNCH FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED
SATISFACTION AT THE POSITIVE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING AT SHEBA
REGARDING THE SITUATION IN CHAD. THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA,
THEY AGREED, SHOULD NOT BE CONCEIVED, AS A BATTLEGROUND FOR
FOREIGN IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATIONS.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THE FRENCH
FOREIGN MINISTER HAD EXTENSIVE EXCHANGES OF VIEWS ON THE PROBLEMS
OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. THEY BOTH CONDEMNED THE SYSTEMS OF RACIAL
OPPRESSION, APARTHEID, THE DENIAL OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF

PEOPLE TO FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE, AND HUMAN DIGNITY AND JUSTICE WHICH EXIST IN THE AREA. THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS REITERATED NIGERIA'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT THE ARMED STRUGGLE OF THE OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AS LONG AS SUCH A COURSE REMAINS INEVITABLE BUT AT THE SAME TIME TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO AND NOT OBSTRUCT ANY CHANCES OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WHICH MAY BE ADVANCED BY THOSE WHO HAVE INFLUENCE WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT. IN THE SAME SPIRIT THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER RECALLED THE ACTION OF THE FIVE WESTERN MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO FIND A FAIR, PEACEFUL AND INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION OF THE NAMIBIAN PROBLEM. THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION FOR THIS INITIATIVE.

THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER UNDERLINED THE MEASURE TAKEN BY THE FRNCH GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION ON ARMS EMBARGO TOWARDS SOUTH AFRICA.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS EXPRESSED HIS GOVERNMENT'S APPRECIATION FOR THE PRESENT ORIENTATION OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE ISSUES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THIS WILL CONTINUE TO BE MAINTAINED AND PURSUED.

THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT HIS VISIT WHICH WAS THE FIRST BY A FOREIGN MINISTER OF FRANCE TO NIGERIA EMPHASIZED THE WILL OF THE FRENCH GOVENEMTN TO PURSUE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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INTENSIFY THE POLITICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. IT WAS ALSO TO DEMONSTRATE HIS GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO ENLARGE THE SCOPE OF ITS RELATIONS WITH ALL AFRICAN COUNTRIES. THE COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION FOR THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VISIT AND WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY IT HAS OFFERED FOR FORWARD LOOKING FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL RESPECT OF SOVEREIGN EQUALITY. END TEXT. END UNCLASSIFIED. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL.

2. COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE ATMOSPHERICS OF THE VISIT WERE STRAINED AT TIMES WHICH MAY ACCOUNT FOR THE FORMAT OF THE COMMUNIQUE. THE FINAL SOUR NOTE OCCURRED DURING THE AIRPORT DEPARTURE WHEN DE OUIRINGAUD'S PLANE DEVELOPED MECHANICAL PROBLEMS AND THE FRENCH PARTY HAD TO DEPANE TO THE GENERAL AMUSEMENT OF THE NIGERIANS. END CONFIDENTIAL. EASUM

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